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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains tips and techniques for making presentations, especially for 4-H groups. The following topics are covered: (1) workshop presentations; (2) training techniques for groups; (3) using an overhead projector; (4) when to use charts; (5) how to make a flip chart; (6) how to make a flannel board; (7) using a chalkboard; and (8) how to teach a skill. The booklet is illustrated with line drawings. (KC)

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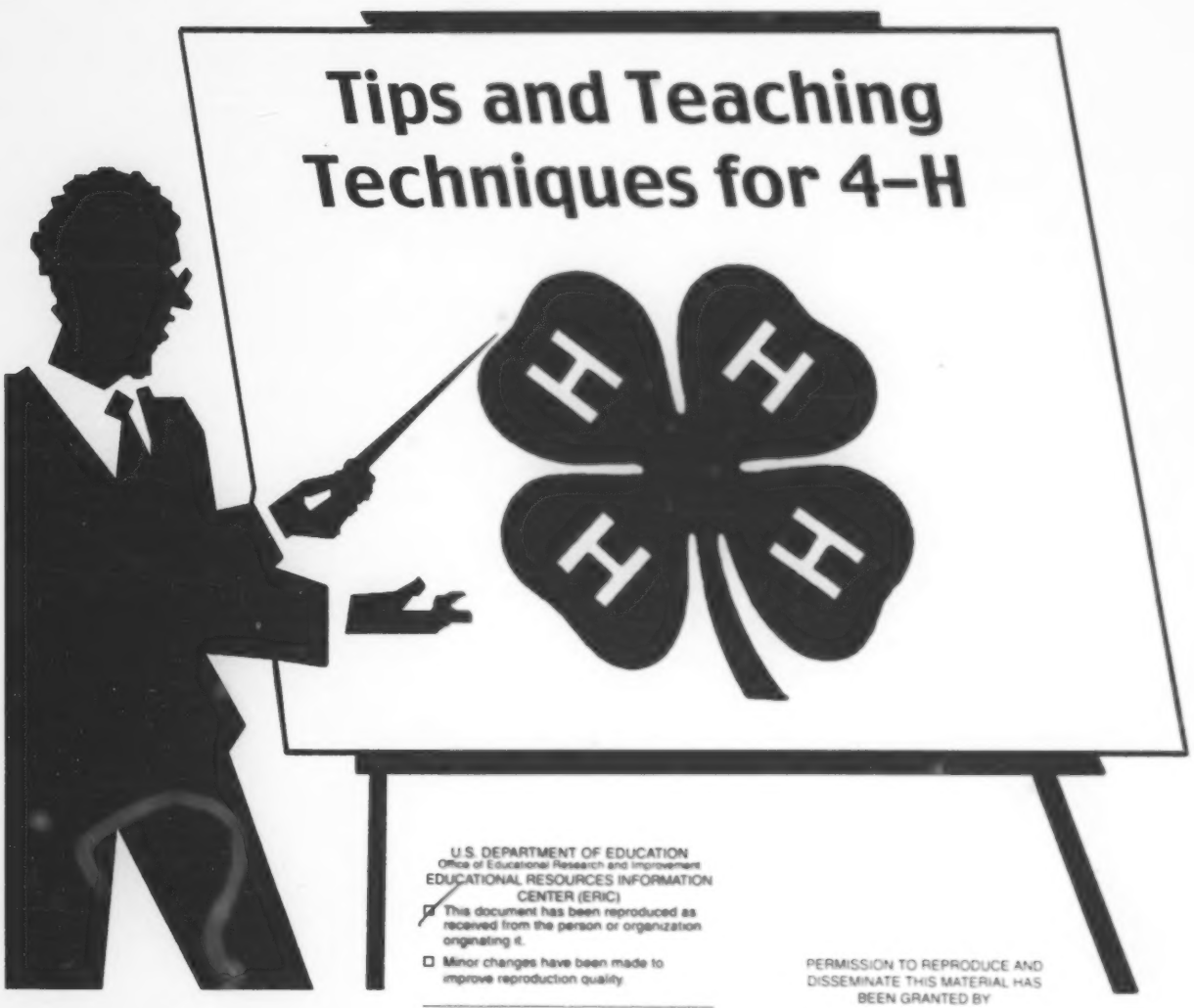

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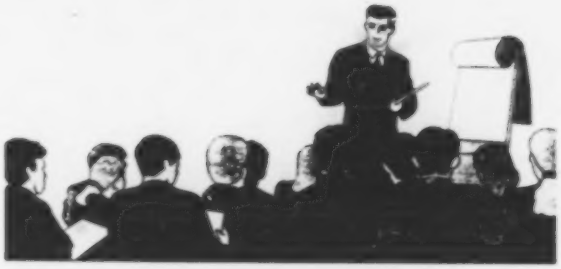
Workshop Presentations



Effective communication is an important part of teaching, learning, and leading a group. It is the way to share ideas and knowledge, expand or learn new teaching skills, and gain experience in leading a group. This publication defines the teaching and delivery techniques that can help you deliver a message effectively, whether you will be teaching a lesson, giving a report, making a speech, or participating in a workshop. This publication also helps you develop the personal skill to communicate ideas and information effectively.

Preparing for a Presentation

A good place to start preparing for a presentation is to find out everything possible about the audience and what they may or may not know about your subject. Also research any areas in the presentation itself that are not familiar to you, then outline the presentation in logical order.

Practicing for a Presentation

The key to a successful presentation is practice. Some people use a tape recorder while practicing so they can hear the presentation themselves. A presentation can also be video taped for review. Another good technique is to include notes in the presentation about the time needed to cover major points. This helps keep a presentation from being too long or too short. Don't memorize or read a presentation word-for-word. Speak spontaneously, with only an occasional glance at the outline.
It also helps to take a few deep breaths before starting the presentation. Remember, a well-prepared presentation creates a feeling of ease between the speaker and the audience.

Personalizing a Presentation

Being nervous is normal. Find a friendly face in the audience and talk to that person for the first few minutes. Look at the audience as individuals, not as a group. Let each person feel you are talking to him or her. Remember to watch the audience's reaction during the presentation, and use thought-provoking questions to keep everyone thinking about the subject. This is a good way to get feedback from the audience and to determine if they understand what you are saying.

Illustrating a Presentation

Use flip charts or transparencies to illustrate major points in a presentation, or draw diagrams or sketches on a chalkboard while speaking. Display any equipment and materials that are important to the subject, and exhibit literature resources on the subject. Illustrate important points with human interest stories to keep the audience's attention. True stories, not necessarily funny ones, are an excellent way to keep the audience interested in a presentation.

Pacing a Presentation

Pacing simply means staying within the time limit allowed for the presentation. It's easy to get sidetracked; make a special effort to stay on the subject. At the end, summarize by restating the main idea and major points. Give the audience a chance to ask questions in the presentation or at the end.

Training Techniques for Groups

Several instruction techniques can add interest to a training session. Some of these are explained below. Select the techniques best suited to the subject to be presented. Some subjects adapt better to different training techniques than others.

Buzz Groups

Buzz groups promote an exchange of ideas. You divide participants into small groups that meet for a short time, usually as part of a longer training session. The group considers a simple question or problem, offering ideas and solutions. Ideas from each smaller group are then presented to the total group to promote further discussion. Each buzz group is usually kept within the same room so you can recall them easily to the larger group. There is a definite advantage to dividing a large group into smaller discussion groups of 6 to 10 people. The small groups discuss assigned topics and report back to the larger group. Consider buzz groups for any of these situations:

- When the group is too large for all members to participate.
- When exploring areas of a complex subject.
- When some group members are not participating.
- When time is limited.

Buzz groups create a warm, friendly atmosphere and encourage shy people to participate. Some advantages of buzz groups are pooling of ideas, developing leadership skills, sharing leadership opportunities, and building spirit in small groups. Buzz groups can be combined and used with other training methods, but they have some limitations. Leadership can be poor, and small group reports may not be well organized. Collecting good information and reaching reliable conclusions are not always possible with buzz groups.

To encourage participation from all group members, keep buzz groups small, and use all buzz groups. Discussion time should be short so only key points are brought out. Organize groups so there is little moving around and most time is spent on discussion.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is different from buzz groups because it emphasizes problem solving. Group members suggest, in rapid-fire order, all possible solutions to a problem. Criticism of an idea is ruled out. Evaluation of ideas comes later.

Case Study

A case study is a realistic situation or series of actual events presented to participants, either orally or by a handout, for their analysis and solution. A case study shows the real-life results of good and bad decisions, which can be guides to new decisions.

Discussion

A group discussion, conducted by a trained discussion leader, is a planned conversation between three or more people on a selected topic. A discussion group examines or explores a topic by exchanging ideas or viewpoints. A discussion requires an experienced leader to keep the conversation on track. The purpose for a group discussion is to express opinions and gain information on a topic and to learn from other members of the group.

As the group leader, keep the discussion on track. Give everyone a chance to talk and be careful of the person who tries to monopolize the discussion. Call on individuals who seem ready to talk, rather than going around the circle. Take care that no one person dominates the discussion. Let the person talking remain seated. More people will participate in the discussion, and those talking will feel more at ease. If the discussion gets sidetracked, bring it back to the main subject by suggesting some additional points that need to be covered in the limited time allowed for discussion. Use a group discussion:

- When 10 or fewer people are in the group.
- To share ideas and broaden viewpoints.
- To stimulate interest.
- To encourage all participants to express their ideas.
- To help identify and explore a problem.
- To create an informal atmosphere.

A group leader should be aware of some ground rules for a discussion group. Here are some of the most important:

- Be an active part of the group.
- Discuss completely, but do not argue.
- Contribute ideas related to the subject.
- Be clear and brief.
- Listen and learn.
- Write down good ideas.
- Work to solve common problems.
- Ask questions to clarify ideas.

Preparing for a Discussion

Make the room as comfortable as possible by checking ventilation and lighting, and choose a seating arrangement that makes it easy for the group to communicate. A good seating arrangement is a circle, a semicircle, or a hollow square. This lets everyone in the group see everyone else, which encourages informality and good humor. Permit friendly disagreements, but only on the point under discussion, not between personalities.

Try to keep the discussion general so it is interesting to all group members, and summarize periodically. Stick to the time limit. If there doesn't seem to be enough time to cover the subject, explain this in the training session evaluation. Some points to remember:

- Prepare for the discussion.
- Get the group to feel at ease.
- Give everyone a chance to talk.
- Keep the group on track.
- Summarize periodically.

Demonstration

In a demonstration, one or more persons show other people how to carry out a task. Tasks usually relate to skills, so participants practice the skills themselves after the demonstration.

There is a difference between just using a skill or method and demonstrating it so others can learn. Before giving a demonstration, find out all you can about the audience. Plan the steps involved in giving the demonstration in advance, and collect the necessary equipment and materials. Prepare a written outline of the steps for a long demonstration. Practice the demonstration from beginning to end until you can do it easily.

Briefly tell the audience the major points to listen for in the demonstration. Adjust the demonstration pace to the difficulty of the various steps. If necessary, repeat the most difficult or important steps in the demonstration, or after all the steps are completed. Warn the audience about the wrong way to do something and demonstrate the right way both before and after showing the wrong way. Leave the audience with a positive point.

Briefly review the important steps of the demonstration in the proper order. Try using a chalkboard or poster as a visual aid in the summary. Give participants a chance to ask questions or, better still, give them a chance to practice what you have demonstrated. For large groups, select a few participants to begin

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while acting as their coach. Coach others until everyone has had a chance.

Lecture

A lecture is one person conveying information to the participants by talking to them, sometimes by using training aids. There is no participation by those listening and, consequently, there is little feedback.

Role Playing

Members of a group are presented with a situation where they must act out the roles represented in the situation. Participants are more inclined to express their true feelings when they are role playing. The way they resolve the situation is analyzed and evaluated by other group members.

Simulation

Simulation recreates the environment where the participants would normally carry out a job and the situations that might arise. Role playing is a simpler form of simulation.

Talk

A talk is like a lecture, except participants are usually involved, and there is some feedback through questions and answers or brief discussion. A talk could be considered part lecture and part discussion; it is less structured than a lecture and more structured than a discussion. A talk is often presented with the help of visual training aids such as slides, video tapes, filmstrips, posters, charts, flash cards, bulletin boards, photographs, publications, sketches, flannel boards, or chalkboards.

Using an Overhead Projector

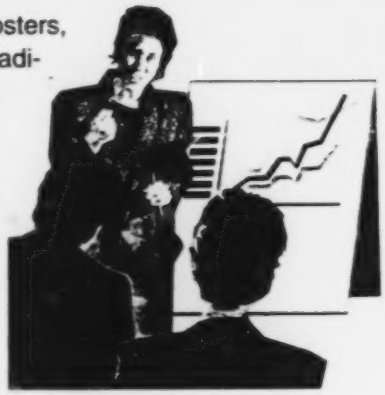
An overhead projector combines the advantages of a slide projector, flip chart, and chalkboard. Most overhead projectors can project transparencies up to 10 inches wide and tall. An overhead projector can silhouette opaque objects on a screen for a creative shadow-picture effect. Projection can be done in a normally lighted room. The trainer can maintain eye contact with the audience while operating the projector. Here are some advantages of using a projector:

- The trainer can write or draw on transparencies with an erasable marker to emphasize a point.
- Markings can be erased with a soft cloth.
- Transparencies are economical and easy to prepare.

Strips of opaque paper or cardboard can be used to cover sections of a transparency to show information progressively. Overlays can be used for a step-by-step buildup or breakdown of an idea or process. The trainer can use a pointer on the screen to call attention to details or important points on the transparencies.

Overhead projectors create a large image when projected from a short distance. If the projector is 12 feet from the screen, the projected image is approximately 8-feet square. However, lettering on a transparency should be no smaller than 1/8 of an inch tall (about 10 point type).

When To Use Charts and Posters



Charts and posters, familiar and traditional training aids, can be used to do many things:

- Attract and hold attention.
- Develop an idea.
- Present information to small groups.
- Highlight key points.
- Review and preview information.
- Add variety to a discussion.
- Speed up learning.
- Increase retention.

How To Make Posters

It doesn't take a sign painter or artist to make attractive posters. Just follow these simple rules, and posters will carry a terrific punch. Begin by writing down a few simple words that explain the main idea. Decide the approach to the audience — funny, dramatic, serious, or factual, and try out different ideas by putting them all down on scratch paper.

Lettering a Poster

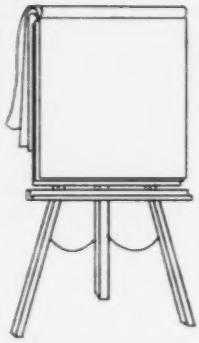
Block out the final poster with lightly-penciled guidelines. Hand letter with magic markers or use plastic stick-on letters, pressure-sensitive letters, or letter stencils. Fancy letters are difficult to read; use plain block letters, taller than they are wide. Be careful not to squeeze the letters together or space them too far apart. When choosing letter sizes for a poster, follow this helpful guide:

- For 10-15 people, 10 feet away, use letters ½-inch high and ⅛-inch thick.
- For 15-30 people, 25 feet away, use letters 1-inch high and ½-inch thick.
- For 30-60 people, 45 feet away, use letters 1½-inch high and ½-inch thick.
- For 60-100 people, 75 feet away, use letters 3 inches high and ½-inch thick.

Using Color and Illustrations

Color adds interest to posters. Select colors that contrast with the background color. Use colored ink, poster paints, or magic markers to fill in letters. Pictures or diagrams cut out of magazines are an economical way to make attractive posters. Remember, make the main idea the largest and the brightest, and leave plenty of white space. Using enough white space draws attention to the main idea.

How To Make a Flip Chart



Flip chart pads are available commercially, but they can be made with a tablet of newsprint, an artist's pad, or even sheets of construction paper, newsprint, or brown wrapping paper. If the paper is not already in a pad, reinforce the top of the sheets with a double fold of paper or cardboard. Staple sheets together or fasten with lightweight bolts and thumbscrews. If the flip chart is not self-supporting, tie it to the top of a stand, an easel, or movable chalkboard. Improvise a chart stand by using the back of a chair or an up-ended table.

Flip Chart Contents

It is a good idea to make a miniature flip chart first. You can make changes or corrections before creating the actual chart. Flip chart order should usually be as follows:

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- A title page.
- Second page should define the subject.
- Following pages should explain the subject and support the explanation.
- Last page summarizes the subject and asks for action.

Making a Flip Chart

Use lettering that can be seen easily. Plastic stick-on letters, stencils, or letters made with wide-line marking pens work well. Underline key words for emphasis. colored marking pens are an effective way to emphasize key points. Remember, don't crowd too much information on one page.

A cue sheet is a helpful tool when using a flip chart. A cue sheet duplicates the flip chart in miniature and is put on the back of the page before the audience sees the page. The speaker can stand slightly behind the flip chart, face the audience, and explain what the audience sees.

Other useful charts are the pinboard charts, with word strips or sentence strips that hang on pins stuck in a pin-up board; sentence holder charts, with word strips in shallow pockets made from cardboard and fastened to the board; folded word charts, with word strips folded in the center, then opened during the presentation; and strip charts, with strips of paper that hide the important points until it is time to show them.

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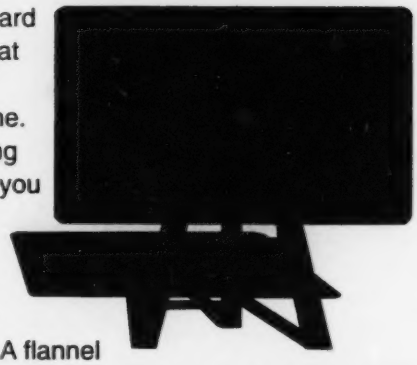
How To Make a Flannel Board



A flannel board is a chart that grows, one idea at a time. By controlling the display, you can direct the audience's attention to key points. A flannel board is especially useful in visually building up the principal parts of a concept. It allows ideas to be rearranged in group discussion. Flannel boards are useful in training sessions to get key points across to the audience, to demonstrate steps in making a craft, to help show relationships of one set of things to another, and to announce coming events.

Construction

Make the background with plywood, Masonite, stiff cardboard, or wall board for backing, or use a large blackboard or up-ended table. Proportion the board to the size of the display. cover the backing with stretched, roughnapped flannel or felt. A blanket will do in an emergency.

Make the display elements of lightweight cardboard or construction paper for one-time displays. Use a heavier poster board for displays that will be used repeatedly. Use light, bright colors, but be sure the colors don't dominate the board, or the visual effect will be lost. Background colors and display colors should be a pleasing contrast. consider the size and type of lettering, the group size, and the room size. Letters should be at least an inch tall.

The best backing for the cards or cutouts is a hook-and-loop material like velcro. Medium to coarse sandpaper, felt, or flannel also works

well. Use as much as is needed to support the card's weight when it is placed on the flannel board. Hook-and-loop materials can be bought in various widths, with or without adhesive on the back.

Using a Flannel Board

Plan key points and words by outlining the talk. Divide the presentation into sections, displaying only one section on the board at a time. To keep the audience interested, keep the presentation simple. A flannel board can add a dramatic effect to a presentation. Remember to consider the room size, and use big cutouts and big letters. Flannel boards are most effective with small groups.

Check the visual effect to be sure contrasting colors are pleasing. Check for spacing, color and readability, and that key points are covered. Practice putting the presentation on the board until each item is in the right place at the right time. Place cutouts or cards against the board and press firmly. Avoid touching them again — they could fall off.

Making a Flannel Board Presentation

Arrange the display strips in the right sequence. Number and title the cards on the back so they will be easy to keep in order. If the audience is not familiar with the flannel board technique, take a few minutes to explain how it works. Face the audience as much as possible, standing to one side of the board. A flannel board cannot carry the entire weight of the presentation. It is only an aid. Ideas can be tied together with strips of colorful yarn, or use arrows to connect one point to another. After the presentation, remove the items from the board in reverse order so they are in the right sequence to use again.

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Using a Chalkboard

Chalkboard work should be simple and brief. Copying long outlines or lists is a waste of time. If having a Copy of the material is important for the participants, you should duplicate and distribute it before the presentation. A chalkboard is like a store window. An overcrowded, dirty, or untidy window has little appeal compared to one that is clean, neat, and displays a few well-chosen items. Chalkboards are the workhorses of training aids. They are effective:

- When the group is recording ideas.
- When a permanent record is not needed.
- To ensure learner participation.
- To attract and hold attention.
- To add interest to a presentation.
- To increase retention.
- To speed up learning.

However, a chalkboard has some limitations. Here are some of them:

- They cannot be used with large groups.
- Few people use chalkboards creatively.
- They do not provide a permanent record.
- They can become commonplace.
- They are usually stationary or difficult to move.

Words should be printed on a chalkboard, not written. Draw light guidelines to make the top and bottom row of letters. Write clearly and avoid fancy lettering. Be sure the chalk is sharp; it's easier to print with a well-sharpened piece of chalk. To keep chalk from breaking, grip it so your forefinger extends over the tip of the chalk. Remember to check for glare when using a chalkboard. Glare can be eliminated by tilting the board or by removing or blocking off the offending light.

A few important points make a vivid impression, so don't crowd the chalkboard. Make the materials simple, and plan chalkboards ahead of time. You can use templates to trace the outline of an object, or trace stick figures and designs over an overhead projector image. You can work on a chalkboard ahead of time and then cover it with poster board until the right moment. You can fasten strips of paper over printed material and reveal information step by step. Get everything together for a chalkboard presentation before the group meets — chalk, ruler, eraser, and other items.

Erase all unrelated material and keep the chalkboard clean as the presentation progresses. Keep erasers clean and erase with straight up-and-down strokes rather than swishing the eraser in circles.

How To Teach a Skill

The two conditions of teaching are that no one can teach more than he knows and that no one can teach faster than the scholar can learn (Ralph Waldo Emerson). There are five basic steps to teaching a skill:

I. Preparation

Before teaching a skill, assemble enough of the necessary equipment and supplies so you can teach, demonstrate, and practice the skill. Simulated or makeshift equipment is never good enough for a demonstration.

II. Explanation

The explanation should create a desire to learn the skill. Unusual facts or illustrations arouse interest and create an appreciation of the value of learning the skill.

III. Demonstration

A demonstration shows a process and is the first step in actual teaching. You should do a demonstration so well and simply that the learner will have the confidence in his or her own ability to achieve success. Demonstrating a skill is not an opportunity for the teacher to show his or her proficiency but should be used to show the steps in acquiring the skill.

IV. Practice

Hearing and seeing aren't enough. The learning process begins to finalize itself when learners can try the skill themselves under the guidance of a coach. Nothing beats the learn-by-doing method.

V. Teaching

People often learn those things they teach to others. Whenever possible, each learner should have the opportunity to demonstrate and practice teaching others. People retain 5% of what they hear, 10% of what they see, 15% of what they see and hear, 80% of what they do, and 95% of what they teach. No one can learn a skill except by doing it; therefore, the most amount of time should be spent practicing a skill. Here is a good time balance:

Explanation (hearing)	10% of the time
Demonstration (seeing)	25% of the time
Practice (doing)	65% of the time

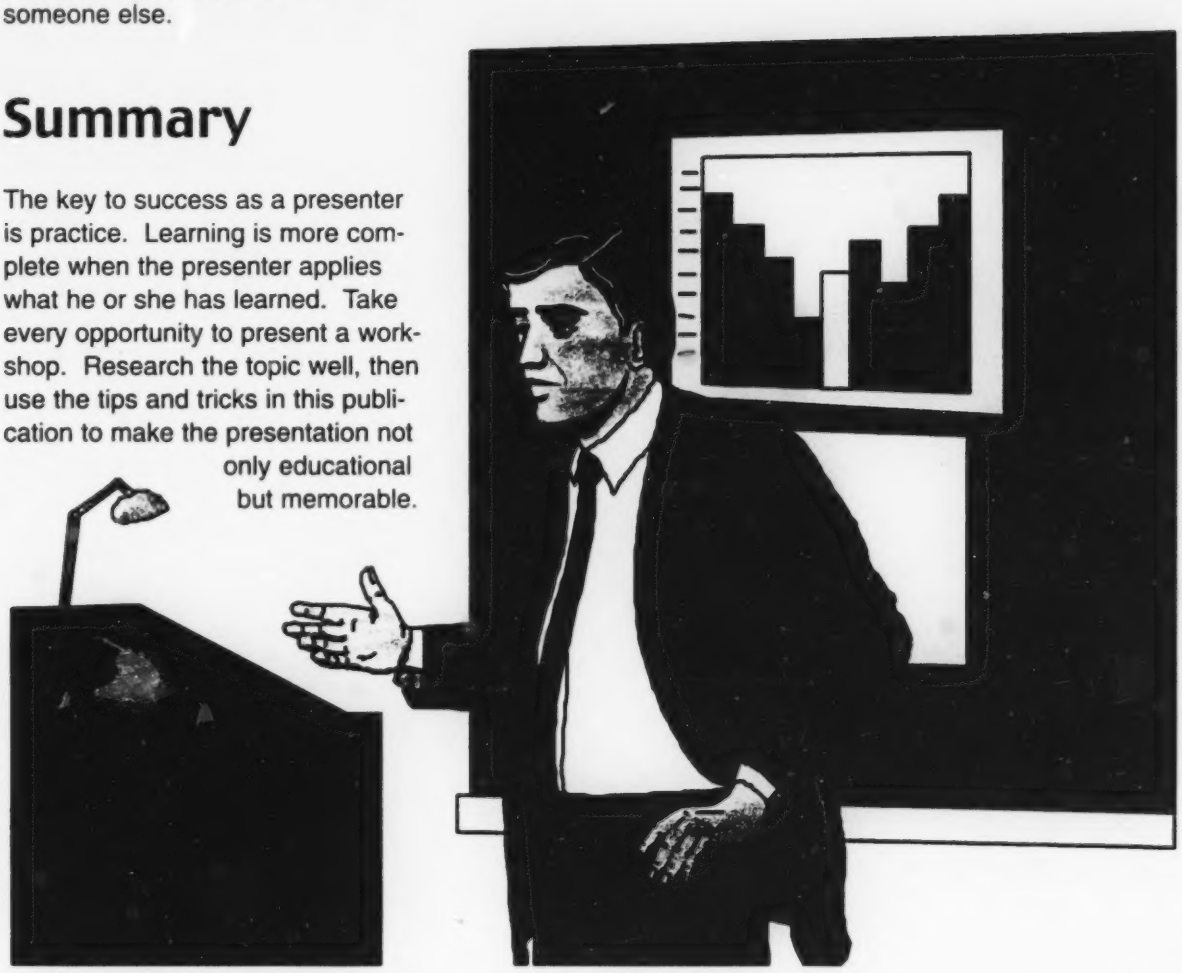
Tips on Coaching a Skill

Before trying to teach a skill to others, be able to perform the skill well. This means reviewing your own experiences while learning, and working out the series of steps that best teach the skill. Keep instructions personal by working with an individual or small group. Each person learns at his or her own pace. If a learner is not familiar with a skill, go slowly. Insist on accuracy first, then speed, if speed is a factor. Don't interfere when learners try to master a skill on their own. Let them make mistakes if this helps them to learn. Encourage the learners to teach each other.

Tactfully point out mistakes, and never make corrections sarcastically. Keep the group motivated with encouraging remarks on their progress, pointing out completed steps, and commenting on the steps they have done well. Urge them to practice and to teach someone else.

Summary

The key to success as a presenter is practice. Learning is more complete when the presenter applies what he or she has learned. Take every opportunity to present a workshop. Research the topic well, then use the tips and tricks in this publication to make the presentation not only educational but memorable.



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